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Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Honorable NORM COLEMAN, a Senator from the State of Minnesota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Rev. Dr. Ruben Diaz, of the Bronx, NY.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, Creator of the heavens and the earth, God of our beloved Nation. The men and women of the United States Senate come before You today to ask that You bless this legislative body with Your wisdom, and guidance.

We ask that You keep its Members in Your holy presence. Psalms 105 says that "Your word is a lamp to our feet, and light to our path." We ask that You light our path especially during the difficult and challenging times of our Nation.

Oh God, we seek Your vision and we want to do Your will that is pleasing to You, and right for our country. We want our decisions to be unified, in step with justice, righteousness, and that which best serve the people of this Nation.

Father, we thank You for allowing us the honor and privilege of living in this great Nation, where our rights and freedoms are protected as "one Nation under God," with a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." We thank You for allowing us the opportunity to serve.

We humble ourselves, and ask that You bless this Senate, its distinguished Members, and all those who work to insure that America continues to be a great Nation in Your eyes and the eyes of the world.

We praise and bless Your Holy Name. In Your Holy Name, we ask, amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable NORM COLEMAN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2003.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable NORM COLEMAN, a Senator from the State of Minnesota, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COLEMAN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I welcome our guest Chaplain today and the many people who have accompanied him from his home community. It gives great meaning, as we all know, to listen to and to rely upon the words as expressed so meaningfully and so aptly by our guest Chaplain today.

I yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from New York to also welcome our guest Chaplain.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, let me thank our majority leader for the grace and hospitality he has shown our honored guest today, and all of our guests from the Bronx and the New York area who are present.

We are graced, of course, by God's presence but also by the presence of one of the great leaders in New York, the Reverend Diaz.

Visitors are not allowed to applaud, but we are applauding in our hearts—en nuestros corazones. And we are honored and blessed to have a leader such as Reverend Diaz. He is a leader in both the temporal world—God's world—and our secular world. And he brings the two together in such a beautiful and exquisite way that he is admired from one end of our State to the other.

He has been my friend for a very long time. We are honored that he serves us in our legislature, but we are even more honored that he brings the word of God to all of us here in the Senate as well as in New York. And may he be granted many, many more years of leadership and good health.

Mr. President, I thank the majority leader.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the Senate will spend the day in executive session trying to reach an agreement for a time to vote on the Estrada nomination.

Yesterday, every issue raised by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle was answered by Chairman HATCH and my Republican colleagues in a 2-hour, rapid paced, very responsive question-and-answer colloquy, designed to further clarify the RECORD. We continued the discussion well into the evening. I think we closed the Senate at about 2 o'clock in the morning. That partly explains starting a bit later today.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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